United Nations S/PV.6447

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6447th meeting

Tuesday, 14 December 2010, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President	Ms. Rice	(United States of America)
Members	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Arima
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Panin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey

Agenda

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994

Identical letters dated 13 October 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (S/2010/513)

Identical letters dated 23 November 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (S/2010/598)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January 1994 and 31 December 1994

Identical letters dated 13 October 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (S/2010/513)

Identical letters dated 23 November 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council (S/2010/598)

The President: Members of the Council have before them document S/2010/628, containing the text of a draft resolution submitted by Austria.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2010/513, containing a letter dated 13 October 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2010/598, containing a letter dated 23 November 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1955 (2010).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6448

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6448th meeting

Tuesday, 14 December 2010, 10.35 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Rice	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Arima
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Onemola
	Russian Federation	Mr. Panin
	Turkey	Mr. Apakan
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Quarrey

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

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10-69159 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President: On behalf of the Security Council, I extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Robert Serry, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

It is so decided.

I now give the floor to Mr. Serry.

Mr. Serry: Allow me, Madam President, to convey to you and your Government my sorrow and condolences at the passing of one of your distinguished predecessors in the position of Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Richard Holbrooke. His distinguished career as a tireless peacemaker and diplomat is, I think, well-known to all of us, and will always remain a personal inspiration to me. We mourn his passing.

At the outset, let me also express once again my sympathy and that of the Secretary-General to Israel, following the death of 43 people in a fire on Mount Carmel two weeks ago. That tragedy was one of the worst natural disasters in the country's history. Assistance came from the region, including from the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Jordan and Turkey, as well as from further afield. Prime Minister Netanyahu has expressed Israel's gratitude for the solidarity and material support.

In September, Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas pledged to seek a framework agreement on permanent status within a year. While that goal remains in place, the process for achieving it has suffered a serious setback. In particular, the Secretary-General regrets Israel's failure to institute a renewed settlement freeze. On 8 December, American efforts to create an environment conducive to the resumption of direct talks, through the renewal of a settlement freeze, were brought to a close. Palestinian President Abbas has reaffirmed that he will not return to direct negotiations unless Israel freezes settlement activity.

During the reporting period in East Israeli authorities approved 130 new hom settlement of Gilo and the construction of 625 was announced in the Pisgat Ze'ev settleme remainder of the West Bank, according to vario there has been a significant increase in constru the moratorium expired on 26 September. Ac the Israeli non-governmental organization Pe construction for 1,600 settlement units has s way of comparison, approximately 1920 u commenced during 2009.

We would like to make clear that t Nations will continue to emphasize that activity is contrary to international law, the and the position of the Quartet. We reiterate position of the international community t should meet its obligations to freeze all activity and dismantle outposts erected sin 2001.

Here in New York, on 10 Decembe envoys met with United States Envoy M advance of his trip to the region, and Unit Secretary of State Clinton gave a sp Washington, D.C., on the same day. The nee strategy is evident. We understand that th States will now engage both sides in indirec all the final status issues, and the Secretar expects the parties to engage seriously. We that the United States intends to be a participant, offering ideas and bridging propo appropriate. We believe it is clear that a su third-party role in mediation is now required. must be a two-State solution based on an e 1967 occupation and a resolution of all core is

United States Envoy Mitchell is curren region and saw Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas today, before Presider departure for a meeting of the League of Ar Follow-Up Committee tomorrow in Cairo. W close consultation within the Quartet on the the period ahead. Quartet envoys are pre meeting of Quartet principals, which we expe place soon in the new year. The Secreta continue to keep the Security Council ap developments through the monthly briefings.

In response to requests from Presider Brazil and Argentina recognized the indepen of Palestine, within borders that conform

ceasefire lines of 1967, on 3 and 6 December, respectively. Yesterday, the European Union Council of Ministers reiterated its readiness, when appropriate, to recognize a Palestinian State.

Quartet envoys also discussed the urgent need to further enable the State-building efforts of the Palestinian Authority. A number of Israeli steps have been under consideration for some time, among them the further easing of restrictions on movement and access, a reduction of Israeli incursions, measures to enable the Palestinian Authority's efforts to extend into Area C of the West Bank, and the release of prisoners. Such measures are now timely and essential. Israel needs to roll back measures of occupation as the Palestinian Authority rolls out the basis for statehood. Quartet Representative Blair's efforts are important in this regard.

The World Bank reports that, in the third quarter of 2010, the Palestinian Authority made steady progress on implementing its reform programme, maintaining financial discipline and achieving its budget targets for expenditures. Public financial management systems were further strengthened, while a pension reform plan was adopted to improve efficiency and sustainability.

Palestinian security forces continue to make commendable efforts to maintain security in areas currently under their control in the West Bank. As the Secretary-General noted in his message on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, it is indisputable that a reliable security partner has emerged. According to estimates, the number of Israeli troops operating in the occupied West Bank is at its lowest level since 2005.

However, tensions persist. Israeli security forces, citing security concerns, conducted 193 incursions into Area A in the reporting period, resulting in 21 Palestinians injured and 98 arrested, among them a Palestinian Legislative Council member from the Hamas-affiliated Change and Reform bloc. On 23 November, Israeli security forces discovered seven pipe bombs in a Palestinian vehicle at a checkpoint near Tulkarem and subsequently seized arms and ammunition in a raid. Violent clashes continued between Israeli security forces and anti-barrier demonstrators, and on 6 December an Israeli military tribunal extended the detention of anti-barrier activist Abdallah Abu Rahmah beyond his scheduled release. We note reports that the number of arrests and interrogations of children have increased significantly, in particular in the Silwan district of East Jerusalem, in recent months. There were eight attacks by Israeli settlers against Palestinians or their property, injuring two Palestinians, while three attacks by Palestinians resulted in one Israeli settler injured.

The number of obstacles to access and movement in the West Bank currently stands at 513. I believe that these can and should be meaningfully reduced in quantity and quality in a manner consistent with maintaining security.

The parties should show discipline and responsibility in refraining from provocative actions. In this regard, I am worried that there has been a rise in demolitions of Palestinian-owned structures in the reporting period, with 14 structures demolished in Area C and 12 demolished in East Jerusalem, displacing 53 people. I have also expressed publicly my concern that, on 8 December, a Palestinian Legislative Council member of the Hamas-affiliated Change and Reform bloc was forcibly transferred from Jerusalem to Ramallah following an Israeli court order. This case and that of three other lawmakers currently facing court proceedings continue to raise serious human rights concerns regarding Palestinian residency rights in East Jerusalem.

I am concerned that a study prepared under the auspices of the Palestinian Authority Ministry of Information denied the religious significance of the Western Wall to Jews. I note that this regrettable study has been removed from the Authority's website. I stress the need for figures of political and religious authority on both sides to refrain from denial or denigration of the other's heritage, rights and dignity.

We continue to follow with concern indications by the Israeli authorities that more restrictive procedures will be applied for crossing points between East Jerusalem and the remainder of the West Bank. While we are cognizant of security concerns, proposed changes must not add new impediments to the United Nations and other international operations, which will be to the detriment of beneficiaries. We are engaging the Israeli authorities on the matter both in New York and on the ground.

The humanitarian Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) was launched on 30 November, totalling $575 million and comprising 213 projects. The CAP

articulates a humanitarian strategy for critical needs in Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem. It aims at addressing humanitarian needs, focusing particularly on areas where the Palestinian Authority has limited control and where needs are not fully met by the Government of Israel. United Nations agencies are increasingly facing difficulties in obtaining the required funds from the international community. I ask donors to fully support the 2011 CAP to prevent further deterioration in living conditions.

This brings me to Gaza, where we are concerned at recent volatility as well as ongoing closure measures. However, there have also been positive developments. On 8 December, Israel decided to allow exports from Gaza, consistent with security conditions. The resumption of exports is key to reviving Gaza's economy and its legitimate business sector. We welcome this measure and hope that it will include all commercial goods, subject to security considerations, and that crossing capacity will be enhanced as necessary to meet demands. The implementation of this decision will be closely monitored. I appreciate the continued engagement of Quartet Representative Blair on this issue. The United Nations continues to seek the end of closure of the Gaza Strip within the framework of resolution 1860 (2009).

The weekly number of truckloads entering the Gaza Strip decreased slightly to 997 from 1,026 during the most recent reporting period and 566 in June 2010 before the announcement of the revised Israeli Gaza policy. A weekly average of 2,800 trucks entered Gaza in June 2007.

United Nations agencies have received approval to complete construction projects in Gaza totalling $110 million. This is a positive step, but further progress is critical. I have discussed with the Israeli authorities the need for approval and implementation procedures to move faster and urged them to allow the provision of construction material to the private sector in Gaza and to expedite further approvals of United Nations projects, including more United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools before the end of the year. I remind the Council that, with very few exceptions, the 1.5 million people of Gaza are unable to leave the Strip for the normal purposes that most of us take for granted, and freer movement of people must also be a priority.

It is essential that calm be maintain
facto authorities have publicly repeated the
maintain calm, although militant groups fire
and 20 mortar shells from Gaza into Israel
wounded an Israeli on 8 December in th
Negev, while a rocket hit a civilian house o
day. On the previous day, a rocket, for
Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestin
responsibility, struck in the south of Ashkelon

I condemn indiscriminate rocket fire
Allegations continue to be made of
smuggling into the Gaza Strip. During the
period, Israeli security forces conducted 4 a
and 12 incursions into Gaza. In total, four P
militants were killed and one was injured,
Palestinian civilians were also injured. I st
importance of maximum Israeli restraint
underscore the need for all parties to protect
and respect international humanitarian law.

I reiterate the calls by the United Nations
immediate release of Staff Sergeant Gilad Shalit
humanitarian access to be granted to him. I co
President Abbas's call on Shalit's captors to relea
It is deeply regrettable that a prisoner exchange
not yet been concluded. I also note that an intern
Arab conference stressing concern for Pale
prisoners was hosted by Algeria on 5 and 6 Decem

I am concerned that the de facto authori
Gaza issued a temporary closure order to the offi
the Sharek Youth Forum, an imp
non-governmental organization partner of the
Nations and other international agencies. I ca
Sharek to be permitted to continue its work in
without further delay or undue hindrance. I stre
importance of full respect for the work of legit
civil society organizations in Gaza and the ne
uphold fundamental freedoms of association
expression.

There has been no progress in efforts to re
Palestinian unity within the framework of
legitimate Palestinian Authority and Palesti
Liberation Organization commitments. On the gro
I am concerned by signs of tensions. My O
continues to urge an end to any challenges to
legitimate Palestinian Authority, and to call for resp
for human rights by all security forces in Gaza or
West Bank. Palestinian Authority security for
arrested members of a Hamas cell in the West Ba

allegedly preparing attacks against Palestinian and Israeli targets, and Hamas security forces detained a number of Fatah members throughout the Gaza Strip. Internal calm is needed, if reconciliation is to progress.

We are also concerned at the continuing lack of progress in the effort to promote peace negotiations between Israel and Syria and at public expressions of lack of confidence in the prospects for progress. While the situation in the occupied Syrian Golan has remained stable, despite continued settlement activity, the resolution of the conflict between the two countries on the basis of Security Council resolutions is important in its own right and critical for regional stability, and is an essential part of realizing the vision of the Arab Peace Initiative.

I note that contacts by diplomatic actors continue with a view to exploring possibilities for progress. Recalling also that Turkey has in the past been an important facilitator of efforts on the regional track, we hope that recent contacts between Israel and Turkey in the aftermath of Turkey's provision of assistance to fight the Carmel fire can help the two countries overcome past tensions.

I now turn to Lebanon, where political activity continues to be dominated by speculation concerning the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. Differences between opposing political camps brought about the suspension of cabinet meetings from 10 November until a meeting now scheduled for tomorrow, 15 December. Lebanese parties continue to express their support for efforts by countries in the region, particularly Syria and Saudi Arabia, to promote stability in Lebanon. In his meetings with representatives from a broad range of political parties in Lebanon, Special Coordinator for Lebanon Michael Williams has continued to encourage all parties to resolve any disagreement through dialogue and through the regular institutions of the State.

The reconstruction effort in the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr al-Bared continues to face challenges. With the return of the first 2,000 refugees to the camp expected by January 2011, I urge donors to continue to provide vital financial assistance for the reconstruction of Nahr al-Bared and to the UNRWA General Fund.

Over the last month, the overall situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has been generally quiet. Air violations have continued to take place on an almost daily basis. During the reporting period, Special Coordinator Williams and UNIFIL Force Commander General Asarta Cuevas held consultations with the parties to discuss details related to the 17 November decision of the Israeli Security Cabinet to accept, in principle, the United Nations proposal for a withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Forces from the northern part of the village of al-Ghajar.

In conclusion, I cannot overemphasize the importance of the period we are now entering. The parties have set for themselves important timelines, which have received strong international endorsement, and 2011 is the year in which they are to be met. It is vital that both parties now be fully forthcoming on substance in talks with the United States and that further measures be taken on the ground without delay to strengthen and enable the agenda of Palestinian State building. We must also continue to focus on improving conditions in Gaza, while calm must be maintained.

We must focus with urgency on the essential elements of a negotiated two-State endgame, for the benefit of both peoples. We urge leaders on both sides to do so, and we also believe that an active third-party role on substance is essential if that is to be done. Close consultation within the Quartet is important in that regard. In the year ahead, the credibility of the political process and its sponsors, including the Quartet, will also be at stake. The Secretary-General will continue to work with the parties, the Quartet and regional and international partners in pursuit of a lasting two-State solution and comprehensive peace in the region.

The President: I thank Mr. Serry for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.55 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.6449

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6449th meeting

Tuesday, 14 December 2010, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Anderson	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Mayr-Harting
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukobratović
	Brazil	Mr. Leitão
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	France	Mr. Bonne
	Gabon	Mr. Issoze-Ngondet
	Japan	Mr. Sumi
	Lebanon	Ms. Ziade
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mr. Amieyeofori
	Russian Federation	Mr. Kravchenko
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Nkayivu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham

Agenda

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2010/611)

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10-69165 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Chad, the Central African Republic and the subregion

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (S/2010/611)

The President: I have received letters from the representatives of the Central African Republic and Chad, requesting to participate in this meeting. I propose to invite those representatives to participate in this meeting without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Security Council, I extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.

It is so decided.

Participants have before them document S/2010/611, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad.

I now give the floor to Mr. Youssef Mahmoud.

Mr. Mahmoud: As you know, Madam President, the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) will lower its sails at the end of the month and start liquidation on 1 January 2011. The Secretary-General's report before the Council (S/2010/611) is therefore his last on MINURCAT as a mission. My task today is to highlight the main points and to make one or two observations.

On the security and humanitarian situation, as the report describes, the situation in Chad remains relatively calm, as does the situation in refugee camps and sites for internally displaced persons. Fears that widespread criminal activities would resume after the rainy season have so far proved to be unfounded. This is largely attributed to the vigilance of Chadian central and local authorities and increased effectiveness on the part of the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS) and the joint Sudan-Chad border patrols. However, the humanitarian situation remains a concern and the need for assistance continues to be immense. Chad still hosts more than 250,000 refugees, and the country is still coping with the consequences of this year's heavy rains in the east and elsewhere.

With regard to the DIS, since the Secretary-General's previous report (S/2010/529), all administrative, management and operational responsibilities have been transferred to the DIS under the supervision of United Nations police. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will assist the Government of Chad to sustain the DIS through the creation of a basket fund managed by UNDP and operational assistance provided by UNHCR. The DIS will require continued assistance from the international community during the post-MINURCAT period.

Pursuant to resolution 1923 (2010), five humanitarian forums aimed at promoting a shared understanding of the protection of civilians were held in various locations in eastern Chad. The last forum will be held on 15 December in N'Djamena to wrap up discussions held in the previous ones. The last High-level Working Group meeting, also mandated by the resolution, will be held on 21 December.

In line with the Government of Chad's early recovery programme in the eastern part of the country, MINURCAT's substantive sections have spared no effort to consolidate their achievements in the areas of rule of law, human rights, gender, HIV/AIDS and intercommunity dialogue, as well as to transfer these activities, when feasible, to the Government of Chad, other United Nations agencies or other national or international partners. My deputy, Ms. Rima Salah, will meet with the United Nations country team and the Government of Chad on 21 December to mark the end of MINURCAT activities and to officially hand over MINURCAT civilian programmes.

Pursuant to resolution 1923 (2010), all MINURCAT uniformed personnel will have left Chad and the Central African Republic by 31 December. MINURCAT withdrew from the Central African Republic on 15 November. On 18 December, the Force

Commander will be the last military person to leave Chad. The last United Nations police officer will leave on 29 December. Only those civilian staff required for the liquidation of the Mission will remain in Chad after 31 December.

I should like to seize this opportunity to thank the Governments of the Central African Republic and Chad for facilitating the withdrawal of MINURCAT. I encourage the Government of Chad to continue to do so throughout the liquidation period and until the last MINURCAT personnel and assets have left the country.

Permit me to say a few words on the Central African Republic. The situation in the north-eastern part of that country remains of concern. Barely 10 days after MINURCAT's withdrawal from the region, on 24 November to be exact, a rebel group attacked the town of Birao and occupied the camps. The Central African authorities have since regained control of those two camps. In the light of regional instability, sustained attention to the eastern part of the Central African Republic is required.

Pursuant to paragraph 27 of resolution 1923 (2010), MINURCAT commissioned a lessons learned exercise. Key findings from the MINURCAT experience were outlined in paragraphs 49 to 63 of the Secretary-General's report. Of particular relevance were securing and sustaining the consent of host nations and the creation of a nationally owned and internationally supported security entity for the protection of civilians. It is the Secretary General's earnest hope that these lessons will be of assistance to the Council as it considers the evolution of peacekeeping as a whole and contemplates future operations that are solely devoted to the protection of civil*ians*.

(*spoke in French*)

Despite its murky beginnings and the challenges it has had to face throughout its short existence, MINURCAT has had some notable achievements. In that connection, the eastern part of Chad will never be the same. MINURCAT not only helped to ensure the physical protection of civilians, refugees, internally displaced persons, host communities and humanitarian workers working under Chadian officials, it also provided them with legal and social protection. That was appreciated by the Government and by the host population. I thank them for that.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for having entrusted this challenge to me. I would also like to thank the members of the Security Council for the trust they have shown in me throughout the last months of the Mission.

The President: I thank Mr. Mahmoud for his briefing and I now give the floor to the representative of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Poukré-Kono (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, for the briefing he has just given us on the last report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/611) on the activities of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), the mandate of which expires on 31 December, pursuant to resolution 1923 (2010).

I note that the report contains a certain number of recommendations and lessons learned for future peacekeeping missions. Its lessons are therefore a source of inspiration not just for the peacekeeping and peacebuilding organs, but also for States. Indeed, we stress that a series of initial misunderstandings were ultimately overcome. We thank Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo, the previous Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who helped to organize MINURCAT.

The Central African Republic notes with satisfaction the withdrawal of MINURCAT, which began on 15 November with the closing of the two military camps in Birao. We acknowledge that MINURCAT discharged its tasks within the limits of its capacities and contributed to ensuring a relatively stable environment in the north-east of the country through its deterrent presence; by assisting refugees, internally displaced persons, and humanitarian agencies; and by resolving inter-ethnic conflicts. The Central African Republic has benefited from the assistance of MINURCAT in establishing its authority over the region. We appreciate the positive role it played throughout its mandate.

The announced withdrawal of MINURCAT led to debates within the Security Council about the follow-up stages, given the ongoing threats in the north-east due to the limited capacities of the Central African forces, the fragility of State institutions and the persistence of insecurity. The idea of a transition period was even mentioned. Recommendations were

made by the international community to strengthen and deploy the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic, while the Central African Government pleaded for the operational capacities of its own armed forces to be strengthened. Time, however, was all too limited for it to achieve all its wishes.

While the Government gradually prepared to deploy troops to Birao, that city was attacked on 24 November, to our collective surprise. The attackers were armed with heavy weaponry, including 14.5 millimetre bi-tube machine guns, 12.7 millimetre rounds and mounted rocket launchers, while the Central African troops had nothing more than Kalashnikovs. There was no comparison. Moreover, the rebel groups came from Darfur to join up with the Convention of Patriots for Justice and Peace (CPJP). The Central Africans, with whom we are very familiar, do not have such sophisticated weapons.

We believe that they want to reproduce the situation in Darfur in north-eastern Central African Republic, which is a very important area geopolitically and geostrategically and the soft underbelly of the region where the rebels of Chad, the Sudan and the Central African Republic can converge easily. We would add that the rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army occupy four prefectures in the Central African Republic.

The Birao event does not only concern the CPJP and its search for weaponry; it also endangers international peace and security in the frontier regions. We ask the members of the Security Council to take these facts into consideration and to be alert to a possible rebel coalition.

As members of the Security Council know, the Central African Republic is at a crossroads. It is obligated not only to hold successful general elections in 2011, but also to guarantee security throughout its territory. The Government has chosen the electoral period in which the people shall do their civic duty to coincide with the dry season, which is also a dangerous season rife with armed groups, rebels, bandits and road-blockers. That reality was reflected in the attack on Birao. However, we note the implementation of certain regional agreements with respect to this situation, for which we are grateful.

Calm has now been restored. On 10 December, the President of the Republic even visited Birao to encourage the armed forces and reassur the area. We reiterate once again the ap on 10 August and 20 October by Mini Affairs Antoine Gambi to the internatio to support the Central African arme equipment, transportation, observation military materiel so that they can ac mission with enthusiasm and efficien request has been addressed to friendly co

We have yet to receive a response as the Government prepares to enter a We have expressed our ongoing reinforcements for our security and de which cannot remain passive and ill-eq face of regional forces that are very we equipped. The major responsibility falls who must be properly equipped if they their sovereign duty and be proactive Regional missions are observer missio limited mandates. The withdrawal of would therefore appear to be an opportun security sector reform and demobilization and reintegration. We ther the international community to spare helping us to move these processes forwar

In conclusion, we thank MINURC contributing countries that have helped us time, howsoever brief. We thank the Secre for his very useful and enlightening report, our gratitude to Mr. Mahmoud, who himself to the Central African Republic United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Central African Republic and MINURCAT.

Attention must not be withdrawn situation in the north-east of the cou remains fragile. We request the assista international community and ask friendly pursue their efforts to equip our security forces and to ensure a smooth electoral pro deadline established.

The President: I call on the repres Chad.

Mr. Allam-mi (Chad) *(spoke in Fren* genuine pleasure for me to congratulate you on assuming the presidency of the Security this month. Allow me also to welcome the Mr. Mahmoud, the Special Representati Secretary-General.

We welcome the high-quality report of the Secretary-General (S/2010/611) to the Security Council on the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). It gives a true picture of the reality on the ground and makes relevant observations and recommendations that should be taken into account by the Security Council. That allows us to limit our statement to the absolute minimum, given that the Security Council is already overburdened by the many crises taking place across the globe.

If the Security Council will allow me, we would like to stress in particular that the non-renewal of the MINURCAT mandate is fully justified, and we welcome the successful implementation of the agreement between Chad and the United Nations on the drawdown of the Mission from eastern Chad and the transfer of responsibilities to the Chadian Government. Since the drawdown process began, we are pleased to have seen that the security situation has improved in eastern Chad, and that improvement has taken place despite some isolated and minor cases of insecurity. Therefore, we are far from seeing the catastrophic situation that some parties said would arise when the Government of Chad asked for the withdrawal of MINURCAT from eastern Chad, although we still need the continued support of the international community to strengthen our financial, technical and material capacities in terms of protecting civilians.

The Chadian Government, through me, would like to reiterate its commitment and determination to continue to efficiently fulfil its mission to protect civilians, particularly refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP), including their voluntary return to their homes. To do so, we are counting, of course, on the support of the international community in many forms, particularly in terms of financing a plan for sustaining the Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS), because that original police force, which was set up within the framework of the MINURCAT mandate, has always played a vital role. It was the DIS that ensured security in the refugee and IDP camps and the areas surrounding them. It has provided security escorts and ensured security in the zone in coordination with the National Gendarmerie and the Nomad National Guard of Chad. In 2011, our plan for sustaining the DIS foresees a budget that will cover operations and logistics at a cost of about $20 million, which is far less than the hundreds of millions of dollars going to MINURCAT each month. For that reason, we are optimistic that the Security Council will be diligent in ensuring that the international community will continue to support us in fulfilling our security and humanitarian missions after the full withdrawal of MINURCAT.

For our part, we have taken measures to support, as best we can, the protection of civilians in accordance with international humanitarian law. Among other initiatives, the Coordination Nationale de Soutien aux Activités Humanitaires et au Détachement Intégré de Sécurité (CONSAHDIS) was created to replace the Coordination nationale d'appui à la force internationale à l'est du Tchad (CONAFIT), which is well known.

I cannot close without expressing my pleasure at the excellent cooperation that has always existed between the United Nations and my Government in dealing with the security and humanitarian challenges resulting from the situation reigning in the eastern part of my country. Of course, MINURCAT was not as perfect a mission as we had hoped it would be. That United Nations mission of a very special nature, in which many hopes were placed, did not meet our numerous expectations.

Nevertheless, in a very special environment and at a given point in time, MINURCAT did play a positive role in terms of protecting vulnerable people, refugees, displaced persons, humanitarian workers and others. We should acknowledge that role and pay tribute to it. The international community, in particular the Security Council and the peace- and justice-loving countries, should be thanked here. The institutions and donor countries that provided troops, funding and equipment should also be warmly thanked.

We also recognize and thank the generous donors who have set up the special trust fund for financing the DIS. We also recognize the tireless efforts of the humanitarian workers, particularly those of the various non-governmental organizations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, and so forth. They should be both thanked and acknowledged by us. Nothing would have been possible and nothing will be possible in the future without their multidimensional support and their efforts on the ground.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Youssef Mahmoud, who today gave his final briefing to the Council in his capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT). We have appreciated his leadership of MINURCAT and we wish him every success in his future endeavours.

There are no further speakers on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on this subject.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.6450

Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6450th meeting

Wednesday, 15 December 2010, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Biden	(United States of America)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Kyrle
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Alkalaj
	Brazil	Ms. Machado
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Toungui
	Japan	Mr. Tokunaga
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mrs. Morgan Sotomayor
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Davutoğlu
	Uganda	Mr. Bukenya
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Burt

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Letter dated 9 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2010/621)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 1936 (2010) (S/2010/606)

Letter dated 9 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/625)

Third report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 3 of resolution 1905 (2009) (S/2010/563)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

10-69415 (E)

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Note verbale dated 28 October 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/567)

Note verbale dated 8 December 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/618)

Letter dated 8 December 2010 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/619)

Note verbale dated 8 December 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/620)

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

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Note verbale dated 8 December 2010 from the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2010/620)

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Vice-President of Uganda, the Secretary-General, ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Your presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed.

On behalf of the Council, I wish to extend an invitation under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq.

It is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Zebari (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: Members of the Council have before them documents S/2010/632, S/2010/633 and S/2010/636, which contain the texts of three draft resolutions respectively. I also wish to draw the members' attention to the documents cited as sub-items of the agenda of this meeting. The Security Council will take action on those three draft resolutions prior to hearing statements. Accordingly, I shall first put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/2010/632 and co-sponsored by Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1956 (2010).

I shall now put to the vote the second draft resolution, contained in document S/2010/633 and co-sponsored by Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, France, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1957 (2010).

I shall now put to the vote the third draft resolution contained in document S/2010/636 and co-sponsored by Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, China, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Gabon, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Turkey, Uganda, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

France

The President: There were 14 votes in favour, none against and one abstention. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1958 (2010).

I have been authorized by the members of the Council to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq and emphasizes the importance of the stability and security of Iraq for its people, the region and the international community.

"The Security Council supports the inclusive political process and power-sharing agreement reached by Iraqi leaders to form a representative national partnership Government that reflects the will of the Iraqi people as displayed by the parliamentary elections of 7 March 2010. We encourage its leaders to continue to pursue a federal, democratic, pluralistic and unified Iraq based upon the rule of law and respect for human rights.

"The Security Council reaffirms the need to combat all forms of terrorism and that no terrorist act can reverse the path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction in Iraq, which is supported by its people, the Government of Iraq and the international community.

"The Security Council welcomes the positive developments in Iraq and recognizes that the situation now existing in Iraq is significantly different from that which existed at the time of the adoption of resolution 661 (1990). Consistent with resolution 1859 (2008), the Security Council also welcomes the important progress Iraq has made in regaining the international standing it held prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990).

"In recognition of Iraq's progress in supporting the international non-proliferation regime and complying with disarmament treaties and other relevant international instruments, its commitment to taking additional steps in this regard and its provisional application of the Additional Protocol to the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), pending its ratification, the Security Council has adopted resolution 1957 (2010), which lifts the restrictions imposed by resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991) relating to weapons of mass destruction and civilian nuclear activities.

"In recognition of Iraq's success in closing out the remaining contracts in the Oil-for-Food programme, the Council has also adopted resolution 1958 (2010) to terminate the residual activities of the Oil-for-Food programme.

"In recognition of Iraq's progress towards the establishment of effective and accountable successor arrangements for the transition of the Development Fund for Iraq, the Security Council has adopted resolution 1956 (2010), which terminates arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq on 30 June 2011.

"Welcoming the progress made by the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait towards the resolution of the outstanding issues between both countries, and encouraging further cooperation, the Security Council calls on Iraq to quickly fulfil its remaining obligations under the relevant Chapter VII Security Council resolutions pertaining to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

"The Security Council welcomes Iraq's reintegration into the region and encourages Iraq and all regional States to deepen and broaden their relationships and to conduct those relationships in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.

"The Security Council reaffirms its full support for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) in advising, supporting and assisting the Iraqi people and Government to strengthen democratic institutions, advance inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation, facilitate regional dialogue, aid vulnerable groups, strengthen gender equality, promote the protection of human rights, including through the establishment of the Independent High Commission for Human Rights, promote the protection of affected civilians, including children, women and members of religious and ethnic minority groups, and promote judicial and legal reform.

"The Security Council commends UNAMI, headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for its support throughout the electoral process, consistent with its mandate. The Security Council encourages UNAMI's continued work, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, to provide protection and help create conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and, in particular, sustainable return of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons, and stresses the importance of further attention to this issue by all concerned.

"The Security Council underscores UNAMI's important role in supporting the Iraqi people and Government to promote dialogue, ease tension, and encourage a negotiated political agreement on the nation's disputed internal boundaries, and calls upon all relevant parties to participate in an inclusive dialogue to that end."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2010/27.

With the Council's permission, I will now make a statement in my national capacity.

It is a genuinely rare opportunity to preside over this meeting of the United Nations Security Council, which is addressing the important issues relating to the Republic of Iraq.

Let us briefly reflect on what has been a critically important period in Iraq's history. In recent years, the Iraqi people have emerged from the depths of sectarian violence and have flatly rejected the grim future offered by extremists. They have earned themselves a chance for much better days ahead. Iraqi forces are now in charge of securing their country, and they have proved themselves more than capable of doing so, as I and many of those here have seen with our own eyes.

Since our Administration came to office, we have withdrawn more than 100,000 American troops from Iraq and ended our combat mission there. We have transitioned from a military-led to a civilian-led engagement. The 50,000 troops who remain until the end of next year, under the security agreement with the Iraqi Government, have been given a new primary mission: advising and assisting their Iraqi counterparts. Meanwhile, the frequency of violent attacks in Iraq has reached its lowest level — thank the Lord — since 2003.

As the Council knows, in March the Iraqi people conducted an historic election, and last month Iraq's political leaders agreed on a framework for a Government that reflects the election's results. That Government will include blocs representing every major community and will not exclude or marginalize anyone. It is made in Iraq, by Iraqis, and it reflects the remarkable development that in today's Iraq, politics has emerged as the dominant means for settling differences and advancing the country's interests. The Iraqi leaders must now honour, in a timely manner, the commitments to one another and to the Iraqi people that were made in the negotiating process.

Going forward, the United States will continue to do its part to reinforce the progress being made in Iraq consistent with our Strategic Framework Agreement with the Iraqis, and to forge an enduring partnership across a range of sectors, including education, energy, trade, health, culture, information technology, law enforcement, the judiciary and security. We respectfully urge other nations to share their expertise as well with this new, emerging Iraq.

I do not need to remind this gathering of the important role the United Nations played, and continues to play, in support of Iraq's development, and the very, very heavy price it has paid. We will not forget the horror of 19 August 2003, when terrorists took the lives of 22 people, including, I think we would all agree, an outstanding, remarkable United Nations envoy, Sergio Vieira de Mello. It was a tragic harbinger of all that was to follow after August of 2003, but the important work of the United Nations continued, and continues to this day. It continues because of the

foresight of that United Nations Special Representative, who rightly observed, and I quote him, "There is no longer such a thing as a distant crisis", since "You can't help people from a distance".

That wisdom, forged during a career spent in the hard-luck corners of the world, lives on in all of those who are bravely helping Iraq to build a better future, including the men and women of the United Nations Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). Over more than a dozen visits to Iraq since the war began — as their Foreign Minister can tell you, I jokingly kid that I deserve Iraqi citizenship, I have spent so much time there, and I have enjoyed every minute — I have seen first-hand, as I hope many here have, UNAMI's efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, conduct elections, advance inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation, aid vulnerable communities, and promote the protection of human rights and the reform of the justice system.

Quite frankly, I have watched the young men and women who are the Special Representative's staff literally risk their lives. I have watched them, and I think sometimes those outside this vaulted chamber underestimate the incredible talent, the incredible dedication and the incredible devotion of the men and women we send into those regions. They deserve our gratitude and our special thanks — not just the special envoys like Mr. Vieira de Mello, but also Ad Melkert, who I worked with every single day I was in Iraq. I will say again, we would not have gotten to this point — and I think our colleague from Iraq would acknowledge this — were it not for their staff, whose work is often done under trying conditions. I might add that I think that work remains as important as it has ever been.

To be sure, Iraq faces further challenges on the road to security and prosperity. Attacks by extremists remain an unacceptable aspect of daily life in the country. We are particularly concerned about recent attempts to target innocents because of their faith, including both Christians and Muslims, and to lash out at security forces working to keep the country safe. But I firmly believe that despite those challenges, Iraq's best days are ahead.

As a founding Member of the United Nations, Iraq seeks and deserves the opportunity to resume its rightful role in the community of nations. Towards that end, this meeting formally acknowledges the significant steps Iraq has taken towards fulfilling its obligations to the United Nations, incurred in the lea up to the 1991 Gulf war. Accordingly, the Secur Council has now lifted restrictions imposed resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991), relating weapons of mass destruction and civilian nucl activities, in recognition of Iraq's commitment non-proliferation, its compliance with relevant treat and other international instruments, its adherence to t highest non-proliferation standards, and its provisio application of the additional protocols to its agreeme with the International Atomic Energy Agency, pendi that agreement's entry into force.

The Council has also terminated the residu activities of the oil-for-food programme, because Ir has successfully closed out the remaining contrac The Council has ended the Development Fund for Ir effective 30 June 2011, due to the steps the country h taken towards resolving debts and claims inherit from the previous regime and establishing accountab arrangements for transitioning the Fund.

We all know that our work on those issues is n complete. We urge Iraq's neighbours and the rest of t international community to continue to work close with Iraq on its remaining Chapter VII obligations. W strongly support the resolution of outstanding issu between Iraq and Kuwait.

Since President Obama asked me to oversee o Administration's Iraq policy when we took office, l me assure the Council that the United States w continue to work with Iraqi leaders on the importa tasks that lie ahead: conducting the census, integrati Kurdish forces into Iraqi security forces, keepi commitments to the Sons of Iraq, resolving disput internal boundaries with regard to the future of Kirku passing critical hydrocarbon legislation and a fiscal responsible budget, and helping stabilize the country economy. We must also continue our efforts to prote and support those displaced by war and help enab voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable returns.

Today, as we take stock of all that the Ira people have endured and accomplished, and all th still must be done, we cannot lose sight of the fact th Iraq is on the cusp of something remarkable: a stabl self-reliant nation with just, representative an accountable Government — a positive force for peac and stability in the region. We all have an interest redeeming that promise and preserving the gains th Iraq has made.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I invite His Excellency the Secretary-General to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I appreciate Vice-President Biden's leadership and strong commitment on Iraq and on other matters of common concern, as demonstrated by the very strong statement he has just made and his own participation in this very important meeting of the Council.

This meeting is a milestone for Iraq. Its people have known tremendous hardship. They continue to struggle with insecurity and appalling violence. They lack jobs and basic services. But today we recognize how far the country has come in key aspects of its journey to normalize its status in the community of nations.

The Security Council has today decided to end several major Chapter VII mandates relating to Iraq, including on weapons of mass destruction and the oil-for-food programme. We all know the difficult history on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The decision to lift the country's remaining obligations has brought this chapter to an end. Iraq has pledged to remain free of weapons of mass destruction. This commitment is enshrined in its Constitution. The country has also joined key international agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. These steps bode well for security and development in Iraq and the wider region.

The Security Council has also decided to end all residual activities under the oil-for-food programme. Here, too, the United Nations will do its part to bring closure to this long-running, complex and unprecedented initiative.

I commend Iraq's leaders for their recent agreements ending months of political deadlock. These efforts should help pave the way for a national partnership Government and for the first peaceful transition between elected Governments under full Iraqi sovereignty. I urge Iraq's political blocs to honour their agreements and move swiftly to conclude the process.

A new Government will face many challenges in providing stability and opportunity for all Iraqis. It will have to normalize Arab-Kurd relations in the disputed areas and ensure the protection of all minorities, including Christians. It will have to manage oil production and move forward with the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

The new Government will also need to improve Iraq's relations with its neighbours and the region. In the same spirit, I encourage Iraq's neighbours to open a new chapter in their relations with Iraq. The United Nations is prepared to do its part to support these efforts and promote peace in a region that has experienced three major wars in the past three decades.

Indeed, the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein's regime, two decades ago, and its legacy caused widespread suffering among the peoples of both countries, and in neighbouring States as well. Iraq bears the primary responsibility for fulfilling its Chapter VII obligations to Kuwait. I hope that, after today's meeting and after the formation of a new Government in Baghdad, there will be new impetus for the two countries to work together in resolving their outstanding issues.

I encourage Iraq to quickly reaffirm its commitment to resolution 833 (1993), with respect to its land and maritime boundary with Kuwait, and to fulfil all other outstanding obligations, including with regard to missing Kuwaiti persons and property, compensation and the maintenance of boundary markers. Progress on these fronts should enable the Council to take up the report I submitted pursuant to resolution 1859 (2008), and to consider further steps for the full normalization of Iraq's international status.

At every step of Iraq's political transition, the United Nations has been Iraq's partner. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) helped in the establishment of the Interim Government in 2004. UNAMI worked hard for the success of two parliamentary elections and a referendum on the Constitution in 2005, governorate council elections in 2009 and parliamentary elections earlier this year. I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your strong support and words of encouragement for the staff of UNAMI, including Special Representative Ad Melkert.

As highlighted in my latest report (S/2010/606) to the Council, the Mission will continue, in accordance with its mandate, to promote political dialogue, provide constitutional support, monitor human rights, deliver humanitarian assistance to Iraqi refugees and internally

displaced persons, help build the capacity of Iraq's electoral institutions and encourage a negotiated political agreement to disputed internal boundaries. The new Government and Parliament will no doubt shape those priorities further.

The country's development needs are considerable. It remains essential to restore the basic services that make daily life bearable. Access to education and health services is likewise critical for the country's future. Iraq's development vision should also encompass its mosques, churches and shrines, its archaeological artifacts, its magnificent history and its contemporary environment. The United Nations is eager to be part of this wide-ranging drive to normalization.

The planned United States military drawdown will have major security implications for the United Nations presence. UNAMI is carrying out its work with greater operational autonomy and is receiving more assistance from the host country. But Iraq remains a challenging environment. The Mission will continue to need strong political and financial support from Member States.

I deeply appreciate the contributions and sacrifices of United Nations staff and other foreign nationals who have helped Iraq through its troubled times. My message to the people of Iraq is this: You have suffered too much for too long. I pay tribute to your resilience. There will be more hurdles ahead, but you have the wisdom and the capacity to overcome them. You are now in the lead in your quest for a better life. The United Nations will continue to stand with you as an impartial partner. We are determined to fulfil that mandate and help you find, once and for all, the path of prosperity and peace.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now invite my friend His Excellency Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, to take the floor.

Mr. Zebari (Iraq): I thank you, Sir, for convening this important and historic meeting. It is a great honour to be invited here today to brief the Council on the current situation and ongoing developments in Iraq. This timely meeting is a demonstration of the international community's broad support for Iraq. At the forefront are the efforts of the Security Council, particularly in the areas of reconstruction and support for the political and constitutional processes.

In this context, allow me to express my appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon; his Special Representative, Mr. Ad Melkert; the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Iraq Office of the Secretariat for their contributions within the mandate of UNAMI and pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions.

Members of the Security Council are aware that a long period of time elapsed between the parliamentary elections on 7 March and the meeting of the Council of Representatives on 11 November. That parliamentary meeting came after an Iraqi initiative led by the President of the Kurdistan region, who brought together all political leaders to meet in Erbil and later in Baghdad to reach a political settlement in order to form the new Government of national unity and partnership. The initiative had immense regional and international support. It led to the resumption of the meeting of the Council of Representatives to elect its President, the Speaker of the Parliament, and to ask Mr. Nuri al-Maliki to form a new Government within the constitutional time frame. Political exchanges and discussions on the new Government will be completed imminently. The new Government will be a power-sharing, representative and inclusive Government that reflects the will of the Iraqi people, as displayed by the parliamentary elections of 7 March. Having myself participated in these discussions, I can report to the Council that the Government will be formed very soon.

In the last few months of the political stalemate we witnessed regional activities that impacted the process of Government formation. While we Iraqis welcome any positive contribution of assistance, the Iraqi people totally reject interference in their internal affairs by others. As a free, democratic and sovereign nation, we continue to work to strengthen relations with our regional neighbours and our brotherly Arab countries. To this end, we in Iraq have embraced the important challenge of hosting the upcoming Arab Summit in Baghdad in March 2011, over which Iraq will preside. Ensuring its success will be a clear signal of our progress and that Iraq has been embraced by its fellow Arab countries.

Iraq has also demonstrated through its foreign policy that it remains committed to the basic principle of our constitution: non-interference in the interna-

affairs of other States, seeking to resolve conflicts through peaceful means, establishing relations on the basis of common interests and reciprocity, and respecting our international obligations.

As regards our relations with the Security Council, Iraq has taken great strides towards meeting our international commitments. Our key focus has been to unburden Iraq from the heavy legacy of non-compliance with international law, break its isolation and regain its rightful place among the community of nations.

Pursuant to our Constitution and proceeding from our commitment to international resolutions, and also in the context of the Secretary-General's report contained in document S/2009/385 on the review of Security Council resolutions imposed under Chapter VII, we have accomplished major and significant progress towards meeting our obligations to the standards of disarmament and non-proliferation in record time. In this regard, I refer to my numerous letters to the President of the Security Council and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency this year, in particular the most recent letter to the President of the Security Council dated 7 December 2010.

My Government welcomes and deeply appreciates the Council's collective decision and support in recognizing Iraq's progress in supporting the international non-proliferation regime and complying with disarmament treaties and other relevant international instruments. My country is committed to taking additional steps in this regard. The lifting of the restrictions imposed by resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991) relating to weapons of mass destruction and civilian nuclear activities is a sign that the new Iraq is significantly different from Saddam's Iraq at the time of the adoption of resolution 661 (1990).

We also worked very hard this year towards completely closing down the oil-for-food programme. My Government, with all relevant ministries and departments, worked with the Security Council and the financial Controller of the United Nations to conclude all remaining contracts. Here again, my Government appreciates the Council's recognition of the success we have achieved in closing out the remaining contracts and terminating the residual activities of the oil-for-food programme. The programme was marred by a web of mismanagement and misappropriation, and its termination lifts another burden on Iraq's recovery.

In accordance with resolution 1905 (2009), my Government has achieved significant progress in 2010 towards developing arrangements to replace the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board. This progress was reflected in the three reports presented to the Security Council in 2010. We have also made concrete progress in the settlement of sovereign debts and commercial claims, and concluded bilateral arrangements on other claims.

My Government therefore appreciates the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1956 (2010) extending the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board for another six months. The request for that measure arose from the delay in Government formation and political instability, not as a result of a lack of resolve and determination.

The adoption of these important resolutions marks the beginning of the end of the sanctions regime and restrictions on Iraq's sovereignty, independence and recovery. Our people will rejoice at having turned a page on the aggressive, belligerent and defiant behaviour of the previous regime towards international law and legitimacy.

Here, I wish to thank Vice President Biden in person for supporting Iraq's liberation from these international sanctions and restrictions, the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council, and the Secretary-General for standing by Iraq to get this far.

Despite those positive achievements, Iraq still has some way to go to resolve all outstanding issues with our brotherly neighbour Kuwait. There has been positive cooperation and exchange between our Governments to resolve and settle all pending issues between our countries stemming from Saddam Hussein's aggression and invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The remaining issues will be at the top of the new Government's agenda, among items demanding serious political action. My country is committed to fulfilling its remaining obligations under relevant Chapter VII resolutions pertaining to the situation between Iraq and Kuwait.

Iraq still faces tremendous challenges. We continue to confront terrorism and criminal elements bent on destabilizing our country. Despite remarkable progress in the fight for Iraq's peace and security, there are still attempts to revive sectarian, ethnic and religious strife, such as the recent atrocities committed against Iraqi Christians. There is shared empathy and a consensus between the Government and the Iraqi people to provide security and a safe environment for Iraqi Christians, who have played an important role in the national heritage of Iraq, in the national Iraqi movement and in the building of our country. International support is critical to encouraging Iraqi Christians to remain in their homeland as an integral part of Iraqi society.

The greatest challenge continues to be to build a State and State institutions on the basis of participation and inclusion, consolidating national reconciliation and deferring to an independent judiciary as the arbiter in implementing the principles of accountability and justice. Those principles were agreed upon and endorsed by all Iraqi political leaders and blocs in the Erbil meeting that took place on 8 November 2010. They are the foundation for the formation of the democratically elected Government and a federal, democratic and unified Iraq, with constitutional institutions and subject to the rule of law, where human rights are protected and all components of Iraqi society are fully respected.

In the economic sector, the situation has greatly improved through a series of economic, financial and investment regulations issued by the Government. Those regulations have contributed to the increase in per capita income and improved purchasing power and the level of social welfare. Through the licensing rounds this year on oil and gas fields, we have brought qualified international expertise to that sector, which will improve Iraq's ability to increase productivity and export capacity so as to enhance economic development. In that context, we look forward to the hydrocarbon law being ratified by the Council of Representatives as soon as possible.

The Iraqi Government carried out an ambitious budget for 2010. On 4 April, the Government launched a five-year national development plan for the period 2010-2014, in order to develop the Iraqi economy, improve the quality of public services and create job opportunities. The federal fiscal budget for the 2011 was referred to the Council of Representatives on 1 December. The budget, whose ratification is pending, is designed to sustain the momentum of economic improvement in the country.

We are aware that the issue of human rights in Iraq and the problem of internally displaced Iraqis and refugees in neighbouring and other countries are issues of concern to the international community. My Government continues to take proactive measures to seriously address those issues. In respect to internally displaced persons and refugees, the improvement in the security situation and the work of the Iraqi Government to provide an appropriate environment for their safe and dignified return have encouraged a significant number of displaced Iraqis to return voluntarily. We firmly believe that this is the solution, as Iraq needs the capacity of all its sons and daughters to contribute towards building the future of our country.

In conclusion, Iraq is a country blessed with rich natural and human resources. However, we continue to need international cooperation and support to make progress towards a stable, peaceful and prosperous future. A democratic and sovereign Iraq that lives in peace and security with its people and its neighbours will be a positive factor in the stability and security of our region. It would also reflect positively on Iraq's Arab and international relations as Iraq contributes as a responsible and rightful member of the international community.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Gilbert Bahibaseka Bukenya, Vice-President of Uganda, to take the floor.

Mr. Bukenya (Uganda): I thank Vice President Biden for organizing and presiding over this high-level meeting. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing, as well as Foreign Minister of Iraq Hoshyar Zebari for his good statement.

The resolutions (resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010)) that the Security Council has adopted today mark an important milestone for the future of Iraq. Uganda is convinced that the future stability and prosperity of Iraq lie in its Government and people taking full charge of their destiny. These resolutions affirm Iraq's readiness to take charge of its own affairs. Uganda welcomes the progress that Iraq has achieved in the political, security and economic spheres in spite of many challenges. That progress would not have been possible without the extraordinary

courage and resilience of the Iraqi people, supported by its international partners. The United States has played a leading role in those efforts.

We commend Iraq's political leaders and people for overcoming their political differences and reaching an inclusive power-sharing agreement in November. It is important that the Prime Minister form a Government expeditiously. That will facilitate national cohesion and foster democratic governance, which are essential for a stable, secure and prosperous Iraq.

The outcomes of today's meeting are a clear testimony that Iraq's international standing has been restored to the status it had prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990). Uganda salutes Iraq for the progress made in putting in place successor arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq and the International Advisory and Monitoring Board, which are expected to take effect by 31 December. It is important that the Government work steadfastly to resolve all outstanding issues during this last extension period.

With regard to weapons of mass destruction, Uganda welcomes the progress made by Iraq in complying with non-proliferation and disarmament commitments. We encourage Iraq to ratify the additional protocol to its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

We commend the Government of Iraq for its commitment to finalizing arrangements to provide appropriate funding for indemnification under the oil-for-food programme.

There are still challenges that Iraq will need to address, with the support of the international community, in order to consolidate the gains made so far. They include dealing with the threats posed by insecurity and terrorist attacks, ensuring the safe return of refugees and the resettlement of internally displaced persons and resolving disputed internal boundaries.

It is essential for Iraqi leaders to work together in addressing the remaining challenges to ensure political stability, peace and development. We welcome the improved bilateral and regional relations because we are convinced that the stability of Iraq is linked to regional stability. We therefore encourage Iraq to strengthen cooperation with neighbouring countries based on a mutual desire to respond to security concerns and bolster economic cooperation.

The action taken by the Council today highlights the progress that the Iraqi Government and people are making in taking responsibility for the stability and development of their country. Iraq will continue to require international support. We therefore call upon development partners and the international community to align their support with Iraq's priorities and programmes, particularly in building the capacities of its national institutions.

In conclusion, Uganda commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq for their important work. We thank the delegation of the United States for spearheading the drafting of the resolutions and the presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/27) that we have just adopted.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, to take the floor.

Mr. Davutoğlu (Turkey): Before I start, let me take a moment to say a couple of words in remembrance of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. Dick was a man of peace. He will be remembered for never taking no for an answer in times of crisis and for delivering peaceful solutions when all efforts seemed to have failed. We mourn the loss of a consummate peacemaker, a real Statesman and a true friend. May his soul rest in peace.

I would like to thank the United States for convening this timely meeting, as well as Vice-President Biden, the Secretary-General and Foreign Minister Zebari for their important remarks.

We meet today in a time of global transformation. History teaches us that periods of profound change are almost always difficult and rarely tidy. The current one is no exception. There are strong undercurrents of change, and a new dynamism can be felt, in international affairs. As the prevailing realities of this new era slowly but surely emerge, the need to promote and bring about the restoration of regional and international order becomes ever more evident. During its tenure on the Security Council, while dealing with the many issues on the Council's agenda, Turkey's efforts have also been aimed at addressing that overarching imperative.

Today, the urgency to restore order is valid for our region, as it is in the case of Iraq. After decades of turmoil, strife and suffering, Iraq today is at a critical moment. The prospects are bright and the challenges are many. By seizing the opportunity and making the right choices, Iraqi leaders now have it within their grasp to make a clean break from the infighting of the past and to shape a prosperous future together. Following much turbulence, today we are very happy to see that Iraqis from all segments of society are once again coming together and working with each other through peaceful and democratic means to take charge of their common destiny and collectively chart a future devoid of oppression, fear or want. That is the future for Iraq and for our region.

In moving forward, fundamental political concepts, such as inclusiveness, national reconciliation and partnership, will continue to be crucial building blocks to ensure a political framework within which democracy, human rights and the rule of law irreversibly take root. On the other hand, gradually altering both the perception and the language of politics in Iraq, from those based on ethnicity and religion to ones defined by political parties and blocs, is also vital. Such a major change will not only help to do away with entrenched divisive rhetoric but also to realign the political discourse along more democratic lines.

The legislative elections of 7 March were a historic milestone for democratization and stabilization efforts in Iraq. Despite the risk of terror attacks, the Iraqi people participated in the elections with a high turnout. The determination of the Iraqi people in assuming ownership of their country through the expression of their democratic will was commendable. We believe that the election results clearly represented the sovereign will of the Iraqi people and their hope for a unified, strong and democratic Iraq.

Here, I should pause and applaud the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) in supporting the conduct of free and fair elections. I take this opportunity to reiterate our full support for the Secretary-General, the United Nations and UNAMI, and in particular Special Representative Melkert. I commend them for their courage and excellent work.

The results of the elections also demonstrate the voters' desire for a democratic process in Iraq. In order to make political progress irreversible in that country, it is crucial that the manifest desire for a broad-based Government is heeded by all Iraqi leaders. Turkey welcomes the development that Iraqi political groups reached an accord on furthering the political process. We sincerely regret that Iraq had to go through an eight-month political impasse, which delayed the implementation of long-needed economic and comprehensive reconstruction programmes that should aim to mitigate the daily problems of the Iraqi people.

It is now crucial to complete the political process with the establishment of a representative, democratic and effective national partnership Government, based on the power-sharing arrangements, with full adherence to the political agreement that the Iraqi political groups reached. We hope that such a Government can soon be formed.

During that delicate process, I visited Erbil and Baghdad on 7 November. We, along with all the Iraqi leaders, worked very hard in encouraging all political leaders to reconcile their differences and agree on a deal that would expedite the political process. We welcomed the convening of the Iraqi Parliament four days after my visit and following the national reconciliation meetings in Erbil.

Turkey's stance vis-à-vis the Iraqi political process has always been very clear. Turkey believes that all segments of Iraqi society should participate in the political process and in an inclusive political dialogue to pursue a concerted effort to find fair, just and consensus solutions to the challenges that Iraq faces in the political, security, economic and social fields and to achieve national reconciliation.

There are important challenges awaiting the next Government in Iraq, such as the census, disputed internal boundaries, hydrocarbon and revenue-sharing laws, constitutional amendments, et cetera. Those challenges cut across all segments of Iraqi society regardless of their ethnic, sectarian or religious affiliations. The peaceful resolution of such issues therefore requires national consensus. Securing consensus on all those issues will probably not be easy. However, such solutions will have a greater chance of implementation once they are achieved. Turkey stands committed to working with the new Iraqi Government to help in any way that it can to address the challenges awaiting the Iraqi people.

We are also pleased to observe that violence has decreased significantly in recent months. Iraq's

national security forces are assuming control over the country's overall security. Efforts to rebuild the security forces should be bolstered. The international community should continue to support Iraq in increasing the competency of its people in uniform. We continue to train, advise and mentor members of the Iraqi security forces.

After two major wars and years of instability, Iraq has come a long way in rejoining the family of nations as a fully sovereign and responsible partner. The achievements to date are both impressive and encouraging. It is therefore now high time for Iraq to return fully to the fold. In that context, we wholeheartedly welcome the resolutions adopted here today (resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010)). By virtue of those important resolutions, Iraq is taking major strides forward in becoming a nation that is no longer bound under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. To be sure, there are still some tasks to be fulfilled. In particular, issues such as the border demarcation, compensation, missing persons and archives pertaining to Saddam's invasion of Kuwait still need to be addressed by Iraq. We are confident that Iraq will be more than up to the challenge.

Turkey, for its part, is happy to be able to cast its vote to recognize the achievements of Iraq and lift the limitations that have been in place for too long.

This is a major accomplishment for Iraq, and we commend the Iraqi Government for the hard work it has done so far. In moving forward, we are confident that the new Iraqi Government will continue to take the necessary actions with a view to cementing stability within its borders and working together with regional and international partners to further enhance security on a large scale.

By virtue of this meeting, the decisions we have taken, the presidential statement we adopted and our national statements, we are essentially closing a sad but temporary chapter in Iraq's history and ushering in a fresh, new era that is full of hope and promise. In a sense, we are witnessing Iraq's rightful return to its former status as a full-fledged sovereign member of the family of nations. This is a welcome development that must be applauded.

Turkey, as the only neighbour of Iraq at this table, has strong and deep-rooted bonds with Iraq. Our destinies have always been intertwined and they will forever continue to be. To be sure, there are still many challenges ahead for Iraq and for our region, which has already seen enough war and strife. But Iraq will not be alone to meet them.

Iraq's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity are vital for the stability and security of our region and the international community. Therefore, we are glad to observe Iraq's great strides in becoming a secure, stable, prosperous and democratic country.

Turkey will continue to support Iraq through thick and thin. The alternative is not only inconceivable, it is also realistically not possible.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Sven Alkalaj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to take the floor.

Mr. Alkalaj (Bosnia and Herzegovina): Thank you, Mr. President, for organizing and presiding over this very important high-level meeting dedicated to the future of Iraq and the Iraqi people. Let me express also my thanks to the Secretary-General for his valuable report (S/2010/606) and his briefing on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), as well as to the Foreign Minister of Iraq, Minister Zebari, for his statement.

Speaking on today's topic — Iraq — as an example of positive achievement in bringing peace and stability, allow me to commend the role of the United Nations, the United States and the wider international community in bringing peace and stability to my country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in 1995. Today Bosnia and Herzegovina is a non-permanent member of the Security Council, and our remembering today the early demise of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke — the architect of the Dayton-Paris Peace accords — is a part of Ambassador Holbrooke's legacy.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is pleased to acknowledge the significant improvement of the overall situation in Iraq. Iraqi institutions have been strengthened despite all the difficulties and challenges on the ground. The recent transfer of ownership of the security sector to the Iraqi forces is a very important achievement for the further enhancement of Iraq's sovereignty and stability.

However, we remain deeply concerned about the security situation in Iraq and strongly condemn the recent coordinated deadly attacks targeting different

religious communities. We want to emphasize that only by providing security to every Iraqi citizen can one guarantee the security of specific communities. Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina urges all actors in Iraq, national and international, to redouble their efforts in the protection of civilians and to bring the perpetrators of those horrible crimes to justice.

This year, with the assistance of the international community, Iraq organized successful elections, and we are pleased to learn that Iraqi political leaders are very close to forming their Government, which will provide new and encouraging momentum. Genuine progress in that regard will help put the country on the path towards democracy, national reconciliation and long-term stability, as well as towards the improvement of the security situation.

We would also like to take this opportunity to commend the Iraqi people for its strength, its courage and its firm determination to build a democratic and unified country despite the immense suffering and huge losses they have experienced over these past two decades.

Iraq has accomplished significant progress in resolving outstanding Chapter VII issues by fulfilling obligations mandated by the Security Council's resolutions. To that end, Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the lifting of some of the restrictions imposed by the Security Council, which will permit Iraq to restore the international standing it held before resolution 661 (1990). We base our support on the following achievements.

First, Iraq has fulfilled all its obligations in compliance with the international non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. It has also signed the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention and joined the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and has signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Furthermore, despite the current political vacuum due to the process of Government formation, Iraq voluntary accepted to apply the additional protocol to the comprehensive safeguards agreement pending its ratification. We strongly believe that the council of representatives will set a high priority on its ratification. We welcome the adoption of resolution 1957 (2010), removing outstanding restrictions relating to disarmament imposed on Iraq in resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991).

Second, we commend the efforts and the strong commitment of the Iraqi Government in regard to closing remaining contracts in the oil-for-food programme. The Iraqi Government has achieved great progress in that regard, and we support resolution 1958 (2010), terminating the residual activities of the oil-for-food programme. This includes the transfer of all remaining funds from the Iraqi account created pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003) to the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI), with the exception of the funds to be used by the United Nations for residual activities of the programme and for the provision of indemnification to the United Nations.

Third, we welcome the progress towards the establishment of successor arrangements for the transition of the DFI. We also reiterate our support for the extension of the DFI and the related legal immunities. We therefore consider that the requirement established in paragraph 21 of resolution 1483 (2003) should continue to apply. We will support decisions that will help to ensure that oil revenue will continue to be used transparently in an accountable manner, and in the interest and for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

Furthermore, those positive developments represent an encouraging environment for further cooperation between Iraq and Kuwait. Bosnia and Herzegovina expects that Iraq's fulfilment of its outstanding obligations — mandated by the Security Council resolutions related to the issues of missing Kuwaiti citizens and third-country nationals, Kuwaiti archives and Iraq's land and maritime boundaries — will be priorities for both countries in the coming period. In that connection, we strongly welcome regional dialogue and the development of relationships between Iraq and States in the region based on partnership and cooperation.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina is very sensitive to the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons and would like to reiterate the importance of resolving that issue. We call upon UNAMI to redouble its efforts, in coordination with the Iraqi Government, to help create conditions conducive to safe, dignified and, in particular, sustainable refugee returns.

The continued strengthening of democratic institutions, national reconciliation, the protection of human rights and the creation of new job opportunities

will certainly help the process of returns, but they will also reinforce Iraqi institutions and the whole of Iraqi society. UNAMI has an essential role in advising, supporting and assisting the Iraqi people and the Government to achieve that goal.

In conclusion, I would like to underscore that Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly supports the work of UNAMI and highly commends the dedication of UNAMI staff to bringing stability and prosperity to the Iraqi people.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Paul Toungui, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon, to take the floor.

Mr. Toungui (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to congratulate the United States of America for its initiative in organizing this debate on the situation in Iraq. Your presence among us, Mr. Vice-President, is proof of the importance that the American authorities attach to the future of Iraq at a time when that country is involved in a process of national reconciliation and transfer of responsibilities in the security and economic fields.

I also welcome the presence of the Secretary-General among us here today and thank him for his informative briefing. I would also like to congratulate the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, for his valuable statement.

The situation in Iraq has been marked in recent years by notable progress, with which my country is pleased, especially regarding the strengthening of the political and institutional process, the definitive transfer of responsibilities in the economic and security fields, and cooperation with other States in the region.

Regarding the first point, I would like to welcome the efforts deployed by the Government and people of Iraq to promote the political and institutional reconstruction of their country, despite the recurrent violence that has affected it in recent years. Those efforts have been particularly perceptible in the field of democracy and national reconciliation.

Regarding the evolution of democracy in Iraq, we are pleased to see that the recent elections were marked by a significant turnout of Iraqis, especially women, who have shown by their massive involvement their firm will to contribute to the future of Iraq.

Regarding national reconciliation, my country welcomes the agreement completed by the political parties on power-sharing, which has led to consensus on Mr. Nuri al-Maliki continuing as Prime Minister. We are convinced that current consultations will soon lead to the formation of a new Government.

The legitimate ambition expressed by the Iraqi authorities to see their country once again play a role within the community of nations will only be effective if Iraq assumes its full responsibilities as a sovereign State. It is in that perspective that we welcomed the decision to draw down United States troops from Iraq on 31 August 2010. This decision has allowed for the transfer of responsibility for security in Iraq to the Iraqi armed forces.

With regard to Iraq's finances, my country is pleased to see the Council's adoption today of a resolution that extends the mandate of the United Nations with regard to the Development Fund for Iraq. We hope that that specific arrangement will enable Iraq to take responsibility for the management of those funds on the basis of the plan of action that it presented to the Council last April.

Concerning the termination of the oil-for-food programme, my country encourages the Iraqi Government to fulfil its commitments with regard to settling the letters of credit.

The future of a stable and prosperous Iraq also means strengthening its cooperation with countries in the region. We therefore support the efforts of the Iraqi Government to normalize its relations with its neighbours, including Kuwait.

I could not conclude without paying homage to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq for the central role it has played in the country. The gains achieved in the evolution of the situation of Iraq should be maintained. My country exhorts the international community to continue its efforts at solidarity with regard to the Government and the people of Iraq. Accordingly, I am pleased that the newly adopted Presidential Statement (PRST/2010/27) takes those serious concerns into account.

The President: I now invite Her Excellency Ms. Vera Machado, the Vice-Minister of Political Affairs of the Ministry of External Relations of Brazil, to take the floor.

Mrs. Machado (Brazil): Mr. President, I thank you for your statement and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, for their statements.

I would also like to commend the United States for its initiative in convening this meeting during its presidency, allowing Council members to take stock and update their assessment of the situation in Iraq. We are also grateful for the invitation extended to Brazilian Vice-President Alencar, who was not able to attend.

In recent years, Iraq has made progress towards strengthening democracy and the rule of law and improving security and public order. We commend the Iraqi Government for successfully holding elections last March, and we welcome the agreement last month to form a national partnership Government. It is our hope that all political leaders will be able to ensure a broad-based Government of national unity. We recognize the important role that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has had in that process, and we expect that it will continue to assist the Government of Iraq, as is foreseen in the Mission's mandate. Those achievements will help address the continued fragility of the security situation in Iraq and counter recurrent attempts to destabilize that multi-ethnic and religiously diverse country.

Brazil strongly condemns all forms of violence, including terrorism. Terrorism must be combated in all its forms. However, terrorism cannot be fought at the expense of the respect for human rights.

We must recognize the courage and resilience with which the Iraqi people have faced so much suffering since 2003. Brazil deplores all human rights abuses and the thousands of civilian deaths in Iraq. Nevertheless, we believe in the capacity of Iraqis to enable their country to emerge as a stable, peaceful and prosperous nation.

I join other members of this Council in recognizing the importance of Iraq achieving an international status equal to that which it held prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990). That view is consistent with the progress made so far by the country in several areas, especially in security and governmental institutions.

It is also consistent with Brazil's long-standing position that the future of Iraq should be determined by the Iraqis themselves. We have always affirmed the need to fully respect the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. Brazil profoundly deplored the 2003 military action, in particular the fact that it took place without the express authorization of this Council. After the intervention took place, the Brazilian Government made clear its view that the Iraqi people should take full control of their own affairs at the earliest possible date.

The painful experience of the war in Iraq should lead the international community to reflect on the importance of upholding the United Nations Charter when military action and the resort to Chapter VII measures are being contemplated.

The time is ripe for bringing a formal end to Chapter VII measures, such as the oil-for-food programme and the restrictions on civilian nuclear activities, thus paving the way for the normalization of Iraq's relations with the United Nations and its full reintegration in the family of nations.

Concerning the issue of disarmament, we welcome Iraq's accession to relevant multilateral treaties, in particular the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as its decision to seek parliamentary approval for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

The normalization of Iraq's relations with all its neighbours, in particular Kuwait, is essential. Security in Iraq is one of the pillars of stability in the Middle East. Once security is sufficiently improved, we must also ensure a safe return for Iraqi refugees. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, over 4.7 million Iraqis have been displaced since March 2003.

We welcome the appointment earlier this year of the first Iraqi Ambassador to Kuwait since 1990 and other promising bilateral initiatives. More needs to be done regarding the repatriation and return of all Kuwaiti missing persons or their remains. There are also issues not fully resolved with respect to the demarcation of the Kuwaiti border, along with other matters relating to property and compensation. We note the commitment previously expressed by the Iraqi Government in that regard and expect the new Government to act accordingly.

The international community must continue to support Iraq at this crucial moment for its independence, sovereignty and stability. Brazil will soon be the first Latin American country to reopen its embassy in Baghdad, and we look forward to strengthening our cooperation with Iraq, which testifies to our continued commitment to the stability of the region and to the progress of the country. Brazil reiterates its confidence in the Iraqi people and Government and their capacity to build a prosperous, peaceful and democratic country.

The United Nations can continue to contribute in facilitating dialogue, defusing tensions and bridging differences among Iraqi political forces. We reiterate our full support to UNAMI and Special Representative Ad Melkert. The Mission, however, will only be able to play the role expected by the Council if it has the adequate means and resources at its disposal, including for its own safety and security. A special account for UNAMI should be considered.

Iraq has come a long way towards stability and prosperity. It must regain its rightful place in the international community. A stable and united Iraq is in the long-term interest of peace and security in the region and beyond. Sustaining Iraq's stability can only be achieved through its social and economic development. We must all learn the lessons of history and continue to cooperate with Iraq to ensure that such common goals are achieved.

I cannot conclude my statement without thanking you, Mr. President, for recalling the extraordinary character of my countryman Sergio Vieira de Mello and his contributions to world peace.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Johannes Kyrle, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, to take the floor.

Mr. Kyrle (Austria): Let me, at the outset, convey to you, Mr. President, our deep condolences upon the passing of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke. We will remember him in particular for his contributions to stability in Southeastern Europe and, more recently, to peace, security and reconciliation in Afghanistan.

We would also like to thank the United States for convening this debate at a crucial moment in Iraq's democratic process. I would also like to convey to the Secretary-General Austria's deep appreciation for the outstanding commitment of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI).

Today also marks a milestone in Iraq's return to its rightful status in the international community. As a member of the Security Council in 1991, Austria voted for a number of the measures that we have brought to a close today. Austria supports this step in recognition of the progress achieved by Iraq and in support of reconstruction and economic development for the benefit of its people. Last but not least, we do so as strong encouragement to the incoming Government to fulfil outstanding Chapter VII obligations.

In 1991, Austria supported resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991) on the premise that actions requested from Iraq represented first steps towards the goal of establishing a zone free from weapons of mass destruction and missiles for their delivery in the Middle East. Today this goal remains as important as ever. In the light of Iraq's commitment to non-proliferation and disarmament, we hope that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will be ratified soon and that the welcome provisional application of the additional protocol to the International Atomic Energy Agency Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement will be followed by its ratification at the earliest possible moment. We also expect the destruction of chemical weapons to continue at a determined pace.

As we approach the twentieth anniversary of the liberation of Kuwait, we look to Iraq for fresh resolve to forge a new partnership with Kuwait built on mutual trust. As border security is paramount to confidence between neighbours, any shadow of a doubt with regard to acceptance of the finality and inviolability of common borders should be avoided. We therefore encourage Iraq to reaffirm its commitment to resolution 833 (1993) with respect to its land and maritime boundaries. Efforts should also be reinforced to clarify the fate of missing persons, as well as to settle the issue of the restitution of Kuwait's national archives.

Much has been said today on the fundamental changes we have witnessed in Iraq, a country whose pluralistic traditions and proud history as a cradle of civilizations we admire as much as we ardently support its secure and prosperous future. At the same time, pressing challenges remain, which require determined stewardship.

As European Union Foreign Ministers underlined on 22 November, there is an urgent need for the formation of a stable and representative Government that is able to rededicate itself to the pursuit of national reconciliation. Such a Government will be vital to responding to the aspirations of all Iraqis — regardless of creed or ethnicity — and to respecting, protecting and promoting their human rights.

We hope to see renewed resolve by the new federal Government and the leadership of the Iraqi Kurdistan region to come to a compromise on their respective boundaries and competences, as well as on the distribution of revenues, including from hydrocarbon resources. Austria encourages the continuation of UNAMI's efforts to build trust between Arab and Kurdish communities in the north, in particular by facilitating dialogue on the safeguarding of language rights, the rights of detainees and the resolution of property disputes.

Austria condemns all indiscriminate attacks on civilians and reiterates its deep concern about recent attacks on religious minorities, including Christian and Muslim places of worship. We urge the Iraqi Government to bring the perpetrators to justice and ensure that all Iraqis are adequately protected and able to practice their faith in peace and dignity.

Austria is also concerned about the reported incidents of harassment and intimidation against internally displaced persons in Kirkuk, including threats of forced eviction.

During our term on the Security Council, we have witnessed a marked decrease in the level of violence. We have also seen Iraqi security forces progressively assuming their responsibilities and the steady anchoring of democratic processes. Those gains have been hard-won and often challenged by unspeakable violence against innocent civilians. Austria will continue to support the Iraqi people in building a secure, stable, democratic, unified and prosperous country beyond our term on the Council. We look forward to working with the new Iraqi Government towards this goal, both bilaterally and in the framework of the European Union.

Finally, I wish to assure the Secretary-General of Austria's continued support for the important work of Special Representative Ad Melkert and his entire team. Let me also assure him that their safety and security — as that of all United Nations personnel — remains of the utmost concern to us.

The President: I now invite His Excellency The Right Honourable Alistair Burt, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, to take the floor.

Mr. Burt (United Kingdom): May I, too, begin by remembering Richard Holbrooke. The House of Commons foreign affairs session yesterday was led by Foreign Secretary William Hague, who offered a warm and heartfelt tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke for those who had worked so closely with him. His lifetime of effort on behalf of humankind is honoured and respected in Westminster and will not be forgotten.

It is an honour to be here and to address the Security Council today. I am grateful to Vice-President Biden for chairing this meeting, and for his continuing determination to support Iraq. The United Kingdom also commends the sustained efforts and support shown by the Secretary-General, the Special Representative for Iraq and the High-Level Coordinator for Kuwait and their teams.

This is, as has been said, a momentous day for Iraq and all Iraqis. As we speak, Iraq's leaders are working hard to complete the formation of a new Government. This will shape Iraq's future. They will face many challenges once they take up office. But these challenges should be viewed by Iraq's elected leaders as an opportunity, after decades of turmoil, to chart the right path for Iraq domestically, in the region and internationally. They should be confident that the international community will continue to support efforts to institutionalize the rule of law and to achieve a successful and peaceful transition to a democratic, inclusive and prosperous State that meets the needs of all Iraqis.

I was in Iraq earlier this month and saw for myself the visible steps Iraq has taken towards stability, security and prosperity. The successful elections in March confirmed the political progress that Iraq had made over the past seven years, and highlighted the powerful desire of the Iraqi people for a Government that is accountable, inclusive and representative.

As you are aware, Mr. President, since March progress in forming the new Government has been

difficult. But we are pleased that the end of this process is in sight. We commend our colleagues there for sticking to their task, continuing to talk and working to reduce ongoing difficulties. We urge Iraq's leaders to sustain the efforts they have made to ensure that all Iraqis will have a stake in how their country is run. The new Government will continue to face the serious challenges of economic reconstruction, energy policy, the normalization and regularization of security, and establishing the place of Iraq in the region. National reconciliation and building a common purpose among Iraq's political groupings will be an essential part of that, and I urge all of Iraq's leaders to come together in a spirit of national solidarity to repair the bonds between communities that have been so severely strained. Clearly, the United Nations will continue to play an important role in bringing that about, and Britain stands in full support of that work.

But we must also look at the other internal challenges that the new Iraqi Government will face and will need to prioritize. Although the long delay in Government formation has put those efforts on hold, I praise the United Nations for facilitating Arab-Kurdish dialogue aimed at discussing revenue sharing, a new hydrocarbons law and disputed internal boundaries and areas. I urge, with some confidence, the new Government of Iraq to address those internal challenges, as a matter of priority and with United Nations support where appropriate.

As I saw at first hand during my recent visit, security in Iraq continues to improve but we are concerned by the continuing activities of those terrorist groups who target and threaten innocent civilians, including vulnerable minorities. The new Iraqi Government has a responsibility to uphold the values of justice, equality and tolerance in all cases of violence against minorities or abuse of human rights. We welcome Prime Minister Al-Maliki's call to Iraq's armed and security forces to secure mosques, churches and other places of worship. All of Iraq's vulnerable minorities have the right to live, work and worship in peace and security. We also welcome the investigations by Iraqi authorities, including a committee in parliament, into recent attacks, particularly those on Iraqi Christians, who are a uniquely vulnerable group. So there have been, and will continue to be, security challenges, but I believe that progress in the overall security situation in Iraq is clearly positive.

Each of Iraq's neighbours also has a vital role to play in ensuring that Iraq is a stable and prosperous country. Support for the new Government of Iraq from its neighbours will bring mutual benefits, as Iraq becomes a key partner with friends in the region. Iraq has much to offer commercially and can be an important political ally, as long as it continues to act as a responsible neighbour. In that vein, we welcome the normalization of the relationship between Syria and Iraq earlier this year.

As I said at the outset, today is a momentous day for Iraq and all Iraqis. We are gathered here primarily to recognize how different the Iraq of today is from the one of 1990. We are all keenly aware that Iraq has a long history with the United Nations and the Security Council. Happily, today we see the progress that can be made through hard work, determination and negotiation, to fulfil the longstanding obligations of the resolutions adopted by the Council. With that in mind, however, the international community will now expect to see concrete progress in Iraq over the coming year, and to see the Iraqis normalize their relations with Kuwait, including by taking steps to resolve outstanding bilateral issues, especially those relating to the land and maritime border. That will not only allow the two countries concerned to reap huge benefits, but will also bring about greater stability for the entire region.

I conclude by offering our congratulations to the Government of Iraq and my friend, His Excellency the Foreign Minister, as well as all Iraqis, on their courage and commitment to define a new future based on peace, stability and cooperation. We welcome Iraq's return to the international fold. Today, we know that Iraq is taking significant steps in the right direction in the face of many considerable challenges. We urge all of the main political blocs in Iraq to work together to provide stability for the Iraqi people.

At the beginning of your remarks, Sir, you referred to a positive future for the people of Iraq, which they richly deserve. We agree. The United Kingdom has a historic and enduring relationship with the people of Iraq, and we remain a steadfast partner and friend, ready to help build a brighter future for Iraq as a respected member of the international community.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Hisashi Tokunaga, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, to take the floor.

Mr. Tokunaga (Japan): Allow me at the outset to join others in expressing our tribute to Ambassador Holbrooke. He was the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs in the late 1970s and had many friends in Japan. He was very highly regarded.

At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to the Honourable Joseph Biden, Vice-President of the United States of America, for taking the initiative to convene this timely meeting.

Today, Iraq is at a critical juncture, just a step away from establishing a new Government. It is important for us to express our support at the ministerial level for the efforts made by the Government and the people of Iraq to build their nation and regain an international standing equal to that which their country held prior to the adoption of resolution 661 (1990). It is also opportune to discuss how the Security Council should involve itself with Iraq. On behalf of the Government of Japan, it gives me great pleasure to share with you our Government's views on those issues.

Political stability is very important for the success of nation-building in Iraq. We hope to see the early establishment of a Government through an inclusive process that involves Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds. The international community should continue to encourage such efforts.

It is necessary for the new Government in Iraq to continue its efforts to improve the security situation on the ground. The withdrawal of the United States combat troops and the transfer of security responsibilities to the Iraqi Government in August were significant steps. The overall security situation in Iraq has improved since then. Japan welcomes that trend and hopes it will continue.

The circumstances in Iraq have changed drastically since 2003, and Japan supports the aspiration of the Government of Iraq to regain an international standing equal to that before the first Gulf war. Iraq has now carried out national elections on its own and is now a fully democratic nation. In order to encourage the Iraqis to continue in that course, my Government fully supports the resolutions and the presidential statement that we adopted today aimed at closing, one by one, the issues left over from the days of the former regime.

At the same time, we hope that the new Government of Iraq will work with the Government of Kuwait to find solutions to pending issues between the two countries on the basis of mutual trust.

Japan believes that the international community should continue to support the peacebuilding efforts in Iraq under the ownership of the Iraqi people. In that context, we support the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, which is playing an important role in promoting political dialogue, national reconciliation and humanitarian assistance.

Japan, for its part, has almost completed the implementation of the $5 billion assistance pledged at the International Donors Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in Madrid in 2003, as well as debt relief of $6.7 billion. Our assistance has focused on rebuilding livelihoods and improving security. Japan intends to continue its assistance aimed at promoting economic and social development in Iraq. The Government of Japan will work closely with the private sector on reconstruction and development projects in Iraq to support the efforts to rebuild the country's economy.

I would like to reiterate the significance of the Security Council sending a unified message at the ministerial level to encourage Iraq's nation-building efforts and efforts to achieve the international standing it had before the first Gulf war. Strong support from the international community is important for Iraq to continue on its path to stability and development. I would like to conclude by expressing the determination of my Government to remain actively engaged in this endeavour.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Vitaly Churkin, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, to take the floor.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's meeting of the Security Council opens a new chapter in the contemporary history of Iraq. We have just adopted three resolutions lifting the majority of Chapter VII restrictions placed on that country. This was possible as a result of the planned and joint work of the Iraqi authorities and the Council's members.

Iraq is gradually acquiring the international status it possessed before August 1990. We welcome this process. The Iraqi people, however, still have a great

deal to do in order to build a secure, stable, united and democratic State based on the rule of law and respect for human rights, living in peace and harmony with its neighbours.

One cannot but be concerned over the security situation in Iraq. The terrorist threat has not abated. Armed groups are active. Ethnic and religious friction is periodically exacerbated. In such conditions, it is especially important to ensure a sustainable and broadly representative political process and the consistent normalization of relations between Iraq and other States of the region.

We are pleased that the Iraqi political forces have achieved agreements on establishing their highest governing bodies. The urgent challenge now is not to delay the final formation of the Government, which must fully reflect the concept of a national partnership. It is important in practice to ensure the contribution of political groups and broad segments of the population in the work of the organs of governing power; otherwise, attempts to normalize the internal political situation and to maintain Iraq's territorial integrity will be jeopardized.

Having adopted today's resolutions, we wish to emphasize once again that Russia's position on arrangements for withdrawing from sanctions restrictions remains consistent and unchanged. We support the phased review by the Security Council of the provisions of the relevant resolutions, and the lifting of those that have been implemented or become irrelevant. We are prepared to do further work on assessing the implementation of Iraq's remaining obligations on the basis of the mechanism enshrined in resolution 1859 (2008).

The international community expects Iraq promptly to ratify the additional protocol to the safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Work must also be completed on the harmonization of Iraqi legislation with international norms regarding export controls and control of dual-use items.

Iraq must settle a number of issues with neighbouring States. In welcoming the improvement in relations between Baghdad and Damascus and the positive momentum in relations with other regional partners, we call for the unconditional observance of the Iraq-Kuwait borders, the recognition of the finality of their demarcation, and the clear-cut implementation of the border infrastructure support project. Iraq needs to enhance its cooperation with Kuwait towards achieving qualitative progress in the search for missing Kuwaitis and Kuwaiti property, including the archives. That will entail further relevant work by the Iraqi authorities. The prevailing positive potential must still be converted into concrete results. Of full and ongoing use is the work of the High-level Coordinator, whose mandate is solely humanitarian in nature.

Given all the existing problems on the Iraqi political scene and the withdrawal of the foreign military contingent, the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq has increased considerably. We deeply appreciate the Mission's humanitarian efforts in helping to establish Government agencies, resolving internal border issues, and constructively involving Iraq's neighbours in the settlement process. We look forward to further effective work of the Mission, within its mandate, with the leaders of the parliamentary caucuses towards agreeing future amendments to the country's Constitution. It is important to ensure substantive assistance for the future electoral process and the upcoming census of the population.

It will be impossible to meet all those challenges without appropriate security for Mission personnel. A significant share of the responsibility for that falls to the Iraqi authorities. For our part, we are prepared to continue to help Iraq to address the challenges ahead.

The President: I now invite His Excellency Mr. Li Baodong, Permanent Representative of China, to take the floor.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes the convening of this high-level meeting of the Security Council at the initiative of the United States. I am very pleased to see Vice-President Biden personally presiding over today's meeting.

I also wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing and Foreign Minister Zebari for his statement.

I wish to make the following observations. First, Iraq is about to enter a critical period in its development. Despite many deep challenges, the overall situation in Iraq is stabilizing. The international community has increasing confidence in the future of Iraq. We commend the Iraqi Government and people

for their efforts in that regard, and support the Iraqi people in determining the future of their country independently. China hopes that all parties in Iraq will work to promote national reconciliation through political dialogue and consultation, and strive to form a new Government expeditiously and to facilitate its effective functioning.

Secondly, now that a new page has been turned in Iraq's history, we understand and support Iraq's aspirations to complete reintegration into the international community. China welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolutions lifting the sanctions imposed under Chapter VII of the Charter with respect to weapons of mass destruction, missiles and civilian nuclear activities, concluding the oil-for-food programme, and providing for appropriate arrangements for the Development Fund for Iraq. It is our hope that Iraq will take this opportunity to accelerate its peaceful reconstruction process and in so doing become an active force in maintaining regional peace and stability and contributing to common development, together with other countries.

Thirdly, Iraq is still confronting a complex security situation. China condemns the recent terrorist attacks in the country. We support the Government and people of Iraq in their efforts to preserve national security. We hope to see a timely strengthening of the Iraqi security forces to fully assume the responsibility of safeguarding national security as soon as possible. China encourages Iraq to enhance dialogue and cooperation with its neighbours in the region and to find appropriate solutions to outstanding issues in a common effort to preserve national peace and stability.

Fourthly, the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) has played an important role in the political process and peaceful reconstruction of Iraq. China is grateful to the Mission. We hope to see continued effective cooperation between UNAMI and the Government of Iraq. We call on all sides to take effective measures to provide the secure environment necessary to UNAMI's operations and to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel and property.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. Morgan Sotomayor, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico.

Mrs. Morgan Sotomayor (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on having convened this high-level meeting on Iraq. We are particularly honoured by your personal presiding over the debate and by the presence of the Secretary-General and Foreign Minister Zebari.

The adoption of three resolutions ending the restrictions imposed on Iraq under Chapter VII of the Charter, some dating back 20 years, and the important message of support contained in the presidential statement adopted this morning (S/PRST/2010/27) confirm Iraq's recovery of its place in the community of nations, rejecting the threats to peace that characterized the previous regime.

The road to this point has not been easy. Mexico's membership of the Security Council in 2002-2003 and that which shall conclude in a few days reflect our deepest commitment to the primacy of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Iraq is a clear example of that. At the time, like a large majority of United Nations Member States, Mexico condemned the former Iraq regime's failure to comply with its international disarmament obligations.

In 2002, when tensions over Iraq came to a head, we supported two-stage Security Council action, in which the first stage established a revised inspection regime on the basis of which a decision would be adopted to determine whether non-compliance was a threat to international peace and security. Mexico always advocated the need for multilateral efforts to reach a comprehensive, peaceful and definitive solution to the issue. In 2003, after the military intervention began, it became obvious that we had to deal with the humanitarian situation and reconstruction in Iraq, appealing to our sense of collective responsibility.

The disagreements that prevented the Security Council from pursuing peaceful disarmament in Iraq did not invalidate the path of multilateralism. What happened next showed that the world could not manage without the United Nations. We therefore stressed the importance of the Security Council respecting the territorial integrity of Iraq, preserving the fundamental right of the Iraqi people to its natural resources, especially oil, and their inalienable right to decide their own future. We also showed that the United Nations had the obligation to promote the protection of the Iraqi people's human, political, civil, economic and social rights, and to contribute to their economic

development. All those principles are reflected in the texts we adopted today.

Mexico welcomes the gradual departure of the international forces from Iraq. It is nevertheless imperative that the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) continue to assist in consolidating reconstruction efforts, promote development, ensure the dignified and safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and strengthen the protection of ethnic and religious minorities, as well as the most vulnerable groups within the country.

Iraq has succeeded in holding free, plural and inclusive elections, which have been a triumph for its people and for democracy as a whole. That momentum must not be lost, and work must continue towards forming a Government that represents all sectors of society and that can consolidate national reconciliation.

In the area of security, although the situation on the ground today is fundamentally different from that of the past, numerous indiscriminate attacks on the civilian population, Iraqi and foreign armed forces and United Nations staff continue to be reported. It is essential that the Iraqi armed forces be able to confront this significant challenge before the final departure of all international forces, while guaranteeing respect for human rights. Finding solutions to the internal border disputes, the status of Kirkuk and the pending issues with Kuwait is also essential and must be taken into account if peace is to be achieved throughout the country.

Iraq was a test of the Security Council and the United Nations itself. Today, this dark page of history has been turned. The consolidation of efforts under way, with the support of UNAMI and the international community, will be key to strengthening the standing of our Organization.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nawaf Salam, Permanent Representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative to convene this high-level meeting, which attests to Iraq's pivotal role in the Arab and Muslim worlds. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports and detailed comments. I would like to praise the role of the Ministers and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ad Melkert, and thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq, Mr. Hoshyar Zebari, in particular for his important statement.

We all know that Iraq was the cradle of civilization and history and a source of scientific and legislative knowledge for the world. It is now recovering that role, despite the wars of the past three decades. Today, Iraq, whose Arab, ethnic and religious diversity makes it strong, is on its way to building a sovereign, independent and united and democratic State — the only one in the Middle East with a Constitution that stipulates a minimum 25 per cent participation of women in Parliament; that reaffirms that the nation's natural resources belong to its people and should be shared equally and fairly throughout the country and among all the people; and whose laws state that all Iraqis have the right to parliamentary representation.

Lebanon welcomes the agreement to form a new Government in Iraq that will incorporate all political viewpoints, strengthen national reconciliation and resolve the pending political issues in a manner conducive to preserving its unity and territorial integrity. We support the efforts of the Iraqi people to consolidate security and stability in their country and call on States in the region and the international community to support them in those efforts.

Lebanon strongly condemns all suicide attacks and acts of aggression against Iraqis, especially recent faith-based assaults. We know that Iraqis will confront such attacks, and we welcome the growing capacity of the Iraqi armed forces to assume responsibility for security following the complete drawdown of United States troops. The measures undertaken by Iraq so far, as noted in the letter from the Foreign Minister (see S/2010/567), demonstrate its commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and confirm that Iraq is not a threat to international peace and security. The Council's decision today to lift sanctions is proof of that.

Iraq's efforts to honour its commitments and obligations under resolution 1905 (2009), despite difficult circumstances, are worthy of praise. The transitional Government now has a successor to the Development Fund for Iraq, which is further proof that it can protect Iraqi assets, despite the delay caused by the slow formation of the new Government. The Security Council understands Iraq's circumstances and has extended the mandate for another six months. We

fully support the reconstruction of Iraq, and call for the cancellation or mitigation of its foreign debt. We respect Iraq's commitment to implementing resolution 1483 (2003) regarding the United Nations Compensation Fund and its acknowledgement of that commitment. We also welcome Iraq's efforts to resolve the pending issues concerning the oil-for-food programme, which contributed to our decision today to terminate the programme completely.

Progress on Chapter VII mandates concerning Iraq and Kuwait has injected new momentum into the process and brought Iraq back into the international fold. We welcome the cooperation of the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait in uncovering the fate of disappeared Kuwaiti persons and prisoners, Kuwaiti property and the Kuwaiti national archives, and welcome the positive atmosphere in that regard. We invite the Iraqi Government to honour its obligations with respect to the Iraq-Kuwait border, in line with resolution 833 (1993). We praise the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, and welcome today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/27) confirming that the international community trusts in Iraq and its future.

The President: I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gerard Araud, Permanent Representative of France.

Mr. Araud (France) *(spoke in French)*: I thank Vice President Biden, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Minister Zebari for their statements. I should like to join in the tribute paid to Ambassador Holbrooke. As a European, I would like in particular to recall the role he played in the conclusion of the Dayton Accords, which put an end to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

France is pleased to take part in this meeting, which marks progress in the process of restoring Iraq's full sovereignty. Today's meeting is an opportunity for France and the entire Council to welcome the progress made by Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. At all levels — political, institutional and security — the Republic of Iraq is on track towards completing its reconstruction and normalization, and its vigorous economy is the best proof of this.

Recent political developments in Iraq give hope for full normalization at the institutional level. We hope that the agreement reached among all the country's political groups on 11 November to form a national partnership Government will swiftly come to fruition. We trust that the spirit of responsibility demonstrated by Iraqi leaders to overcom differences will prevail so as to resolve outstanding issues ahead of the effective forn the Government. In so doing, the political stak in Iraq have chosen to take up the challenges future, and France wishes to lend them its full

On the path towards normalization, Fran to stand alongside the people and the leaders This commitment is above all political, refl many high-level visits. Both the President Republic and the Prime Minister visited Bagh the past two years. This commitment is acco by firm engagement on the ground and the res of our bilateral cooperation in the areas of industry, agriculture, domestic security, gov environment and culture.

This support is also reflected at the inter level. France supports the legitimate quest of authorities to restore the country to the inter status it enjoyed prior to August 1990. Resoluti (2008), which France sponsored in 2008, identi objective. Two years later, while Iraq ha considerable preparatory efforts, the Council h closed three components of the measures take Chapter VII. France welcomes this.

With respect first of all to restrictions re weapons of mass destruction and civilian activities, the Council indicated on 26 Febru readiness to lift those restrictions once the ne measures had been taken. Today, we welcom efforts in this area. The lifting of sanctions with to disarmament and non-proliferation — symbolic in view of past mistakes — will all new Iraq to access technologies hitherto bann the basis of this restored trust, we call on th authorities to pursue their efforts by as international obligations that will mark the end painful episodes in its history.

France also welcomes the fact that I regaining full sovereignty over its oil revenue closure of the oil-for-food programme is a sym the normalization of Iraq's international status return to its sovereignty. While France was una support this text today, it was clearly not becau resolution's objective is in the least problemati objective of allowing Iraq to regain its full sover over the funds retained under the oil-fo programme is obviously one that France fully sup

The modalities for implementation in respect of this very technically complex issue remain pending. Intensive but belated discussions were undertaken to draft a text that all Council members, including France, could support. Unfortunately, these discussions did not result in a text within the necessary time frame that included all the guarantees France considers to be necessary to end the activities under this programme. France hopes that, in the future, its requests will be thoroughly taken into account when the agreements provided under the resolution are implemented.

Iraq must be able to emerge from Chapter VII. In this regard, France welcomes the progress made by the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait in resolving the remaining issues between them, and urges them to strengthen their cooperation. To this end, it is crucial for Iraq to honour without further delay its final obligations under Council resolutions.

As it has done until now, France will continue to support the efforts of the Government of Iraq, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, to take all measures enabling Iraq to once again become a nation that is fully integrated into its regional and international environment. The United Nations, be it the Security Council or the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq — whose courageous work on the ground we wish to salute — will continue to support this objective.

France wishes to reiterate its willingness to help these two friendly countries, if so requested, to lay the groundwork for ambitious cooperation. We hope that this next stage will hasten the regional integration process to which Iraq has successfully committed and which we support.

The President: I give the floor to Her Excellency Mrs. U. Joy Ogwu, Permanent Representative of Nigeria.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and your delegation on organizing this high-level meeting to review the journey in Iraq. I would also like to acknowledge the remarkable effort of the Secretary-General on behalf of our Organization, and welcome him to this meeting.

Today's Iraq bears little resemblance to its image at the outset of Operation Iraqi Freedom. A new Iraq has emerged, with a fledgling democratic system supported by the presence of international combat troops and the United Nations. It is evident that Iraq enjoys stability and self-governance to a far greater extent than it did a decade ago. In spite of the phased withdrawal of the bulk of international combat troops from its territory, it appears that the country is regaining its strength and operational capacity.

After months of political stalemate following the elections of 7 March, it is heartwarming that Iraq's political leaders have finally agreed on the formation of a new, inclusive partnership Government. Nigeria is encouraged by this demonstration of unity in the country, involving the Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish communities. This, we believe, is a long-awaited and important milestone.

The path to true and lasting political stability and economic independence is a difficult one for any nation, not least for a country emerging from war. By way of example, the provision of basic infrastructure and services presents ongoing challenges to the Iraqi people. We are therefore pleased to note the planned implementation of a five-year National Development Plan. We are convinced that the implementation of the Plan within the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework will help to address the current gaps in infrastructure and service provision.

Given the recent history of Iraq, there is a continuing imperative for international support and partnership. We welcome the extension by six months of the immunity granted to the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) to support the Government's efforts in setting up the successor mechanism to the DFI/International Advisory and Monitoring Board. We particularly welcome the adoption of the resolutions bringing the oil-for-food programme to an end and removing Iraq from numerous Chapter VII measures.

While we are encouraged by the progress that has been made in terms of Iraq's relationships with its neighbours, we hope that these positive measures will help to reinforce the confidence of the international community in Iraq's Government and its people. To ensure sustainable outcomes, it remains important that Iraq's Government work assiduously to fulfil all of its remaining obligations under Chapter VII, including those owed in respect of Kuwait. We are pleased that this morning His Excellency Mr. Zebari totally reaffirmed Iraq's commitment to meeting its international obligations.

The security situation in Iraq remains dire. We commend the Iraqi forces for assuming leadership of their security following the end of the United States combat operation in August 2009. However, insurgent elements continue to feature in Iraqi life, causing mayhem with targeted terror attacks against innocent civilians, including minorities and religious sanctuaries. Such incidents are a grim reminder of the fragility of the security situation and the obligation to guarantee the rights of minorities, particularly Christians and other vulnerable persons.

The Government of Iraq should thoroughly investigate and hold accountable the persons behind all acts of violence in the country. In cooperation with the Iraqi authorities, we must bring to justice all perpetrators, organizers, financers and sponsors of terrorism who seek to dismantle the hard-won democracy in Iraq.

Iraq's future hangs in the balance for several reasons, not least of which the fragile security situation. Although 50,000 United States troops will remain in Iraq, their role will be essentially non-combat. This shift will create a window of vulnerability in the country's security framework that extremists could possibly exploit. The Council should therefore lend its weight to further operational and logistical training and counter-terrorism support for Iraq's security sector. Now more than ever, Iraq needs the backing of the international community in order that we might declare with one voice that no terrorist act can reverse the path towards peace, democracy and reconstruction in Iraq — a peace representing the shared aspiration of the people and Government of Iraq and the international community.

The President: I thank all the participants for their contribution to this meeting. My thanks go particularly to my fellow Vice President, the Secretary-General, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq and other representatives.

I would like to close by saying a few final remarks in my national capacity.

Today was an important milestone for the Government of Iraq and the people of Iraq in their ongoing effort to leave behind their troubled past and embrace a much brighter future. The three resolutions we adopted bring an end to the burdensome remnants of the dark era of Saddam Hussein, lifting restrictions relating to weapons of mass destruction and civilian nuclear activities and terminating both the oil-for-food programme and the Development Fund for Iraq.

It is a rare honour, I say to my colleagues, to be able to preside over this gathering. I thank them all once more for their efforts in support of this process.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.